Innovative controls for renewable source integration into smart energy systems

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D8.8

Progress Report

WP8 – Network Management

Grant Agreement no 675318

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[6] Confidential: restricted to consortium, other designated entities (as appropriate) and Commission services.
[7] Classified: classified information as intended in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC

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DEFINITIONS

- Beneficiary partners of the INCITE Consortium are referred to herein according to the following codes:
    - **IREC**. Fundacio Institut de Recerca de l'Energia de Catalunya (Spain)
    - **UPC**. Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (Spain)
    - **TUD**. Technische Universiteit Delft (Netherlands)
    - **VITO**. Vlaamse Instelling Voor Technologisch Onderzoek (Belgium)
    - **UniBo**. Università di Bologna (Italy)
    - **UGA**. Université Grenoble Alpes (France)
    - **GE Global Research**. General Electric Deutschland Holding GmbH (Germany)
    - **Efacec Energia**. Efacec Energia - Maquinas e Equipamientos Electricos SA (Portugal)
- **Beneficiary**. The legal entity, which are signatories of the EC Grant Agreement No. 675318, in particular: IREC, UPC, TU Delft, VITO, UniBo, UGA, GE and Efacec Energia.
- **Consortium**. The INCITE Consortium, comprising the above-mentioned legal entities.
- **Consortium Agreement**. Agreement concluded amongst INCITE Parties for the implementation of the Grant Agreement.
- **Grant Agreement**. The agreement signed between the beneficiaries and the EC for the undertaking of the INCITE project (Grant Agreement n° 675318).
- **Partner Organisation**. Legal Entity that is not signatory to the Grant Agreement and does not employ any Researcher within the Project and namely, 3E NV (Belgium).

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ABBREVIATIONS

- **AC.** Administrative Committee
- **CA**. Consortium Agreement
- **CDP**. Career Development Plan
- **CMO**. Central Management Office
- **DEC**. Dissemination and Exploitation Committee
- **EC**. European Commission
- **ESR**. Early Stage Researcher
- **GA**. Grant Agreement
- **INCITE**. Innovative controls for renewable source integration into smart energy systems
- **IRP**. Individual Research Project
- **SB**. Supervisory Board
- **TSC**. Training Steering Committee
- **WPs**. Work Packages

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report aims to provide insight into the progress made within INCITE during the first year of the Action. It summarises the general status at the end of year 1, the selection process and recruitment of the Early Stage Researchers (ESRs), the management of the consortium and the problems encountered so far.

The main activity of the consortium during the first year of INCITE has been the recruitment of the 14 ESRs that will be developing their Individual Research Projects (IRPs) within the framework of the project and will become experts in control and design aspects of the future electric network. The recruitment methodology was based on implementing an effective centralized recruitment strategy. The selection of the fellows took place between M2 and M7, while recruitment happened between M7 and M13, depending on the candidate's availability, the administrative processes required in each case and issues arisen during the process. A Career Development Plan (CDP) has been set up in all cases between the ESR and the supervisor, ensuring the most suitable guidance and training possibilities for each ESR. These CDPs will be periodically revised and assessed, and will be used to monitor the progress in the fellows' careers.

The organisational structure of the Action was defined in the Consortium Agreement -the Supervisory Board (SB) and the management committees, together with their roles and responsibilities- and nominations took place during the Kick-Off meeting.

All planned deliverables for the considered period have been produced in due course and the great majority of the milestones have been reached. Communication and outreach plans have also been put into action with the creation of the INCITE website and the social media profiles. These three aspects ensure that all communication and outreach events and activities reach the interested stakeholders, from the general public to a more specialised audience.

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1. GENERAL PROGRESS OF THE ACTION

The main activity during the first year of the INCITE ITN has been the recruitment of the 14 Early Stage Researchers (ESRs). The selection of the fellows took place between M2 (January 2016) and M7 (June 2016) of the project, while recruitment happened between M7 (June 2016) and M13 (December 2016), depending on the candidate's availability and any administrative processes needed (VISA, working permit, etc.). The recruitment of three ESR was delayed to M13, two cases due to longer than expected visa issuing times and one due to the renounce of the initially selected ESR one week before signing her contract in M12.

INCITE's Kick-Off meeting was held at IREC premises in Barcelona (Spain), January 14th 2016, where the implementation of the project was discussed, the governance bodies (Supervisory Board (SB) and project committees) were elected, and the recruitment procedure was put into place. Further discussion regarding the training and dissemination and exploitation plans together with approval of the candidates took place during the SB meeting in Grenoble, April 25th 2016.

The first INCITE training event (1st Workshop) took place at VITO's premises in Genk (Belgium), November 23rd-25th 2016. The ESRs presented the initial findings in their Individual Research Projects (IRP). Scientific training in the workshop focused on smart-grids and energy markets topics while the complementary skills addressed were related to project management (a course awarding 1 ECTS).

As all ESRs have only worked on their IRPs for a few months, there are still no publications or significant scientific progress. Nevertheless, all ESRs have agreed to a detailed planning regarding publication targets, expected results and training activities with their supervisors. The scientific work, in all cases, has been focused on identifying previous results and possible contributions, system modelling and on getting the necessary skills to advance in their IRP in the next months.

All deliverables described in the Grant Agreement (GA) due during the period covered in this report have been produced and uploaded to the Participant Portal. They are, in chronological order, D8.2 (Consortium Agreement), D8.11 (Supervisory Board of the network), D8.1 (Project website completion), D6.1 (Dissemination plan report), D8.3 (Recruitment completion report), D5.4 (Shared experimental facilities report, D6.3 (First workshop proceedings), D7.1 (Annual training report) and D8.4 (Annual financial report). Ethics deliverables have not been produced as no ethical issues have arisen. Ethics aspects have been considered for each IRP and how to proceed in case of issues, though not foreseen, has been stated in all Career Development Plans (CDPs).

The great majority of the milestones described in the GA for the first year of implementation have been timely reached. Those include MS1 (Grant and partnership agreement), MS4 (Organisation of the kick-of meeting), MS5 (Organisation of internal meeting), MS6 (Fist workshop organisation) and MS14 (Assessment of progress in IRP), MS17 (Assessment of training programme). MS2 (Planned recruitment of the ESR completed), due in M12, has been completed in M13. MS20 (Organisation of outreach activities) has also been met: in this first year the activities were focused on the general public communication via the blog and the social media. MS3 (Selection of test benchmarks) has been partially reached due mainly to delays in the starting dates of the fellows. Some benchmarks have been proposed but further discussions will be needed.

In general, it can be concluded that the designed work-plan has been mostly covered without critical deviations. ESRs were selected according to plan and the great majority of them were recruited and started working in their IRPs between M7 and M12. This implies a slight delay in the original plan of

recruitment taking place in M7 in all cases, but falls within reasonable timing taking into account the selected candidate's availability and the administrative processes required. A last minute declination of the first candidate at the end of M11 delayed the incorporation of ESR41 to M13, as the second candidate in the list of approved candidates had to be contacted and recruited on short notice. The incorporation of ESR11 and ESR22 also suffered delays due to visa issuing related matters and happened during M13. These delays will not significantly affect the ESRs' training and the research progress.

With regard to upcoming activities, the first Summer School, initially planned for May 2017 according to the GA, will take place in June 2017. This shift in dates is due to June being a more suitable month for this kind of events both for people from universities and fellows taking courses. Duration and budget for the event remain the same.

2. RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

The methodology developed by the Consortium for the recruitment process was to implement an effective centralized recruitment strategy. The selection procedure was divided into four parts:

a) A dissemination and application stage, where the Consortium put emphasis on the widespread dissemination of the available positions to reach the largest possible number of candidates,

b) a first selection process, where a first evaluation of the eligibility conditions of the candidates was done,

c) a second selection carried out by the supervisors considering the background and skills of the candidates, and

d) a last selection stage resulting in a final ranked list with the best three candidates per position.

At the **dissemination and application stage**, each Supervisor prepared a Job Vacancy Description using a template, and sent it to the CMO (Central Management Office). The Supervisors and the CMO actively promoted the vacancies, which remained open for at least 6 weeks. The main channels for promotion were: EURAXESS and the project website, beneficiaries' websites, academic job websites, specialized/thematic websites, social networks, mailing list, e-letters, and personal and corporative contacts. Among other, the positions have been announced in:

- INCITE website (http://www.incite-itn.eu)
- EURAXESS (http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess)
- Academic Position (http://academicpositions.eu)
- Barcelona Adds Value (http://www.b-value.com)
- Mailing lists: Power-Globe, CSS, e-letter on Systems, Control, and Signal Processing, Mathematics in Energy Systems, among others.
- Twitter and LinkedIn.

The announcements were also sent to an extensive list of Master programs on Energy, Automatic Control and Electrical Engineering. To foster the applications of women, the announcement was also sent to the email distribution list of IEEE Women in Engineering.

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According to the closing dates for application, the application stage was divided into two calls: a first one with closing date on March 6th 2016 (originally set for February 21st) and a second call, corresponding to positions ESR32, ESR41 and ESR42, with closing date on April 1st 2016. The first closing date was extended to increase the number of applicants.

The interested candidates submitted their filled forms hosted at the INCITE website (http://www.incite-itn.eu) providing also the following documents:

- An application form including:
  - Personal information, educational degrees and research experience.
  - A list of the positions with an order of preference (up to four positions).
  - A declaration of honour establishing the fulfilment of the mobility criterion.
- A CV in a standardized format, including the names of two references willing to provide detailed recommendation letters about the candidate.
- A motivation letter for each position applied.
- Copies of academic transcripts and degree certificates in English.

During the **first stage of the selection**, the CMO collected the applications, evaluating the eligibility conditions according to Article 6.2.A (b) of the GA. As a result, the CMO generated a list per vacancy with possible non-eligible candidates clearly highlighted, uploaded to the project intranet, and sent it with the application documentation to each Supervisor. The Training Steering Committee (TSM) was informed about the results of the application procedure.

At the **second stage of the selection**, each supervisor evaluated their candidates taking into account the criteria described in Article 32.1 of the GA. A small number of candidates were invited for a teleconference interview; some of them were also invited for a face-to-face interview. As a result of this selection stage, each Supervisor produced a ranked short-list of three candidates to be approved by the SB.

During the **final stage of the selection**, the Training Steering Committee (TSC) evaluated the short-list of candidates provided by each supervisor for each position aiming to coordinate a proper gender balance and scientific exchange and, after careful consideration, recommended the approval of pre-selected candidates. The SB approved the three top candidates for the 11 positions (first call) during the first SB meeting on April 25th 2016, and the remaining three were evaluated and approved by email (May 9th 2016 for position ESR32 and May 24th 2016 for positions ESR41 and ESR42).

Each Supervisor informed the interviewed candidates about the result of the selection and the CMO contacted the remaining candidates. If any candidate requested an in depth analysis and feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their CV, the CMO along with the corresponding Supervisor provided it. Each beneficiary followed their institution's internal rules to announce the results of the recruitment process.

In this recruitment process, the INCITE Consortium received a total of 389 application for the 14 ESR positions open. The vast majority of applicants applied for more than one position. Only 12% of the candidates were women, and 81% of the applicants were non-EU citizens. Figures 1 and 2 show the gender percentage and the percentage of EU and non-EU citizens, respectively, for each position.
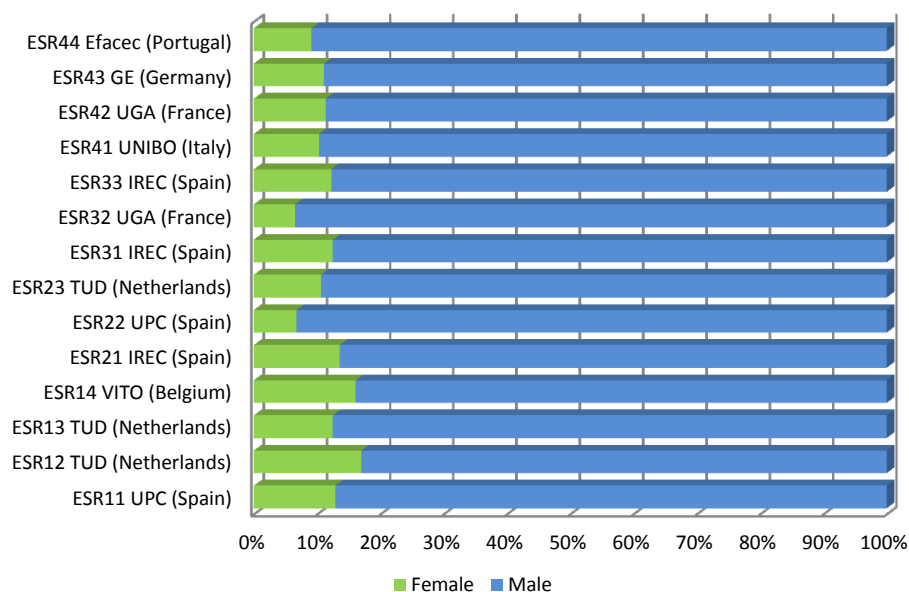
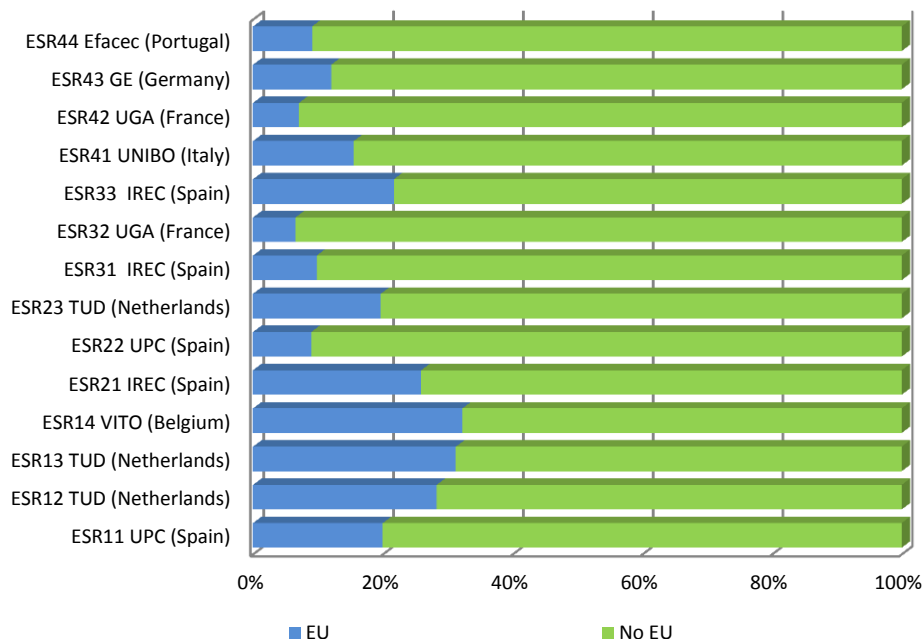**Figure 1.** Candidates by position and gender

Figure 2. Candidates by position and nationality

The list of selected ESR is summarized in Table 1. At the time of SB approval of the ESR, women represented 14% (2 out of 14, ESR33 and ESR41) of the total recruited fellows. Even though this was a low gender balance value, the SB agreed that this was an acceptable gender balance value, as the

final percentage of selected women was quite close to the total percentage of female applicants. Due to the last minute declination of the selected ESR41 a week before her starting date at the Università di Bologna, the percentage of women fell to 7%, as the rest of candidates on the SB approved list for that position were male.

In terms of origin, 64% of recruited fellows are EU nationals, while 36% are non-EU citizens and required visa.

Additionally, 21% of the recruited ESRs had family[8] at the time of recruitment and, therefore, were eligible for the family allowance.

#	Name	Last Name	Nationality	Gender	Host	VISA	Family
ESR11	Wayan Wicak	Ananduta	Indonesian	Male	UPC	Yes	Yes
ESR12	Hazem	Abdelghany	Egyptian	Male	TUD	Yes	Yes
ESR13	Shantanu Tarun	Chakraborty	Indian	Male	TUD	Yes	No
ESR14	Jesus	Lago Garcia	Spanish	Male	VITO	No	Yes
ESR21	Thibault	Péan	French	Male	IREC	No	No
ESR22	Unnikrishnan	Raveendran Nair	Indian	Male	UPC	Yes	No
ESR23	Tomas Manuel	Pippia	Italian	Male	TUD	No	No
ESR31	Adedotun	Agbemuko	Nigerian	Male	IREC	Yes	No
ESR32	Felix	Koeth	German	Male	UGA	No	No
ESR33	Sara	Siniscalchi Minna	Italian	Female	IREC	No	No
ESR41	Eduardo	Ruano Rodrigues	Portuguese	Male	UNIBO	No	No
ESR42	Nikolaos	Sapountzoglou	Greek	Male	UGA	No	No
ESR43	Miguel	Picallo Cruz	Spanish	Male	GE	No	No
ESR44	Konstantinos	Kotsalos	Greek	Male	Efacec	No	No

Table 1. Recruited ESRs

The selection of all ESRs was finished on time but the signature of the contracts was delayed in most of the cases regarding the original planning. Eleven of the fourteen ESRs have started their fellowship before the milestone MS2 on month 12. Recruitment of ESR11, ESR22 and ESR41, on the other hand, suffered delays:

- Recruitment of ESR11 and ESR22, both at UPC, was delayed until M13 due to visa issues. This delay will not affect either their scientific training and IRP development or their complementary skills training, as they will receive locally the network-wide courses that they missed due to the late recruitment.

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[8] 'Family' means persons linked to the researcher by marriage (or a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country where this relationship was formalised) or dependent children who are actually being maintained by the researcher.

- Recruitment of ESR41 was delayed from M12 to M13 as the initially selected candidate renounced days before signing her contract. The next candidate in the approved three-top candidate list was immediately contacted by the supervisor, and his recruitment process was started upon his acceptance. The whole process delayed the incorporation of ESR41 one month. This delay will not affect either the scientific training and IRP development or the complementary skills training, as he will receive locally the network-wide courses that he missed due to the late recruitment.

3. CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR EACH RECRUITED RESEARCHER

A CDP has been established in all cases between the ESR and the supervisor, and approved by the SB after an initial evaluation by the TSC, during the first weeks of recruitment. The aim of the CDPs is to ensure the most suitable training programme for each ESR. This plan should provide and enable high-quality supervision, mentoring arrangements, and career guidance. It considers the background of the ESR and the technical skills needed to carry out the ESR's research project.

All CDPs are structured in the same way (see Figure 3) following the guidelines of European Research Executive Agency (REA) and contain the following main contents:

- brief overview of the research project and major accomplishments expected
- long-term career objectives (over 5 years), with a clear statement of the goals and the further research and training activities that are needed to attain those goals
- short-term objectives (1-2 years), with the following subjects:
    - research results, including anticipated publications, conferences, workshops, etc.
    - research skills and techniques, including training in specific new (technical) areas
    - research management
    - communication skills
    - anticipated networking opportunities
    - other activities (e.g. community) with professional relevance.

The objectives in the CDP have been set with respect to the skills and experience that each researcher should acquire at a given time of her/his career. These objectives will be periodically revised and assessed, both by ESR and supervisor and by the TSC, and should be used as to proactively monitor the progress in the researcher's career and to ensure that the fellow receives the most adequate training and supervision to achieve the long-term goals set.

At the SB meeting that took place on November 24th 2016, during the first Workshop, the template for the CDP for year 2, including a brief evaluation report and a table to keep track of the training received by the fellow, was approved. This document will be filled in by ESR and supervisor towards the end of the first recruitment year, evaluated by the TSC and, finally, approved by the SB.

Figure 3. Template of a CDP

At the moment of the submission of this report, all ESRs have started within the INCITE project. For all of them, the CDPs have been drafted, and after an initial assessment and feedback by the INCITE TSC, the CDPs have been submitted for approval to the INCITE SB. All submitted CDPs have been approved by the SB.

4. MANAGEMENT OF THE ACTION

Before starting the project, beneficiary partners agreed a Consortium Agreement (CA) in which set the administrative procedures and functioning of the governance bodies defined in the GA. The organisational structure of the consortium, defined in the CA, is comprised by the following bodies:

- **Supervisory Board (SB)**: The SB is the ultimate decision-making body of the consortium. It consists of one representative of each beneficiary and a rotating representative of the ESRs. Responsibilities of the SB include: to guarantee that the research and training objectives are properly fulfilled, to assess the progress and quality of the overall Action training programme and to evaluate the impact of the programme, or to resolve any issue that might arise during the project.
- **Administrative Committee (AC):** The AC, chaired by the coordinator, handles the logistic and finance issues of the network management.

- **Training Steering Committee (TSC):** The TSC supervises the technical and training issues and evaluates the progress of the ESR training and the technical quality of the project.
- **Dissemination and Exploitation Committee (DEC):** The DEC is responsible for analysing the scientific production and identifying complementary resources among parties, and also for assessing whether the results are suitably disseminated at the different levels (general public, scientific community and decision-makers) and exploited.
- **Central Management Office (CMO):** The CMO, constituted with the aim of helping the coordinator in general management, coordination and monitoring of training and research activities, is in charge of day-to-day management of the project.

As stated in the CA, the SB and the committees will meet at least twice a year. The first consortium meeting, where the governance bodies were elected, was the Kick-Off meeting. It was held at IREC premises in Barcelona (Spain), January 14th 2016, where the implementation of the project was discussed, and the recruitment procedure was put into place.

The following SB meeting took place at UGA in Grenoble (France), April 25th 2016. There, training and dissemination and exploitation plans were discussed and the ESR candidates selected by the supervisors were approved.

A third SB meeting took place during the first INCITE workshop in Genk (Belgium) on November 24th 2016. In this meeting, the member of the SB discussed about the progress of the dissemination plan and training activities, the organization of the first Summer School in 2017, and the election of the ESR's representative in the SB. ESRs are actively involved in the management of the action. The ESR position at the SB is a rotary one and is elected as follows: first the institution of the ESRs is randomly selected (this institution will not be considered in further selections) and then the ESRs from that institution (if more than one) decide on the representative.

In addition to the face-to-face meetings, the members of SB have voted by email in order to speed up decisions such as the approval of candidates and CDPs.

INCITE has also a Partner Organisation, 3E, which provides secondment opportunities for ESR14, ESR21 and ESR23. The Consortium has decided that special agreements should be set among the 3E and the Beneficiary partners hosting the previously indicated ESRs in order to rule tasks and intellectual property related with the secondments of the fellows.

Risks already identified in the GA are summarised in Table 2, together with the mitigation actions foreseen for each case. Additionally, new risks have been identified during the first year of implementation of the action:

- **Risk:** ESR renunciation just before signing the contract
  - *Proposed mitigation measure:* contact the following selected candidates in the SB approved top three candidate list
- **Risk:** Visa issues delaying ESR incorporation
  - *Proposed mitigation measure:* The ESR will receive locally the network-wide courses that they have missed due to the late recruitment.

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Risk No.	Description of Risk	WP No.	Proposed mitigation measures
R1	ESR resignation before 18 months	1-5	With the proper authorization of the EU Commission, a new ESR will be recruited to take over the research activities corresponding to the IRP.
R2	ESR resignation after 18 months	1-5	The TSC will evaluate the possibility that the research objectives are covered by other IRPs
R3	Unavailability of laboratory equipment at the expected project stage	1-5	The AC will ask another partner for similar equipment and its availability. In case of negative answer, the TSC will reconsider the objectives.
R4	Problems in event organisation	7	In case some partner is not capable of organising the planned event, the AC will ask one of the other partners to take over of the event organisation.

Table 2. Critical implementation risks and mitigation actions identified in the GA

5. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Creating awareness in the scientific community, general public, and policy-makers about the progress and results of INCITE is an important outreach activity of the Project. In order to fulfil this goal, a Dissemination Plan was set in which the target audiences are identified and activities are established. The plan is basically oriented to three targets:

- Non specialised audiences: e.g. general public, high school students
- Specialised audiences: e.g. organizations and associations that run electrical and/or renewable-energy-based facilities, scientific and academic communities
- Decision-makers: e.g. power system operators, technological developers.

For the implementation, the plan establishes as dissemination tools:

- Social networks like ResearchGate, LinkedIn, and Twitter.
- Project website with a Blog and News section
- Brochures to distribute in events
- Scientific publications in journals and conferences
- Participation in exhibitions and dissemination publications

In INCITE, one of the main tools foreseen for the dissemination of the project outcomes is the **project website** (http://www.incite-itn.eu/); a critical element for external communication with the stakeholders. The content of the INCITE website is organized in eight main sections: Home, Network, Research, Training, Fellows, News and Blog. The Blog and News sections are communication tools aimed to general public and policy makers. Supervisors have started their periodic contributions to the blog, following the approved communications plan. Posts can be found at http://www.incite-

itn.eu/blog/. ESRs will also contribute to the blog, explaining to the community their IRPs and the results of their research.

One of the already ongoing strategies is "INCITE Ambassadors", in which the attendance of the participants to conferences and exhibitions is widely announced in the website and social networks, so they can be contacted in the events.

INCITE's LinkedIn account (https://www.linkedin.com/company/incite-itn) and twitter profile (https://twitter.com/inciteitn) have been set up and broadcast information about activities, INCITE Ambassadors, etc. It is also planned that ESRs are in charge of and contribute to the twitter feed.

Considering that the ESRs are starting their IRPs and no scientific results have been produced so far, the main communication activities were focused on creating awareness about the project using the website, social networks and the dissemination that supervisor and fellows have done in the events they have attended.

Internal communication has been set up using the platform Office365 and Skype for Business. The idea is that all participants and specially the ESRs have fluid and continuous communications channels in order to foster interactions in the development of their IRPs.

No network-wide outreach events have been organized so far. Different events are being considered at beneficiary level. As an example, the Barcelona located partners (IREC and UPC) intend to take part at a Science Slam together with other Barcelona ITNs in March 2017 and in the Science Week.

6. IMPACT OF THE ACTION

INCITE is a training network aimed to provide the ESRs with the necessary skills to become attractive candidates for top universities, research centres and companies in the field of electrical and control engineering and/or to start up their own companies.

All recruited ESRs have enrolled in a PhD programme and are on their way to earn a PhD degree in control or electrical engineering and to become experts in the aspect of the control and design of smart grids defined in their IRP, while keeping a broad and complete view on the control of smart grids with high participation of Renewable Energy Sources (RES). They have also started their complementary formation both at network-wide level, during the first INCITE workshop, and at local level (scientific and technical specific courses, communication and language courses), which will contribute to broaden their career perspectives. The INCITE fellows form a diverse group coming from different countries and with different backgrounds. In this sense, the first INCITE Workshop has served them not only to gain knowledge in scientific and complementary skills but also to create networking connections and share experiences, and increase their exposure to a multi-sectorial, international and multi-cultural environment.

The scientific impact of the project is, at this initial point, limited. As most of the ESRs have only been working on their IRP for a few months, there are still no relevant scientific contributions to produce significant impact in the research fields. Nevertheless, based on preliminary results and developments foreseen, scientific impact is expected for the next year.